



# Indiana State Department of Health

## Epidemiology Resource Center

### Quick Facts

#### **About...Monkeypox**

##### **What is monkeypox?**

Monkeypox is a rare viral disease that occurs mostly in central and west Africa. It is called "monkeypox" because it was first found in 1958 in lab monkeys. Blood tests of animals in Africa later found that other types of animals may have had monkeypox. Scientists also found the virus that causes monkeypox in an African squirrel. These types of squirrels might be the common host for the disease. Rats, mice, and rabbits can get monkeypox too. Monkeypox was reported in humans for the first time in 1970.

##### **How is monkeypox spread?**

People can get monkeypox from an animal with monkeypox if they are bitten or if they touch the animal's blood, body fluids, or its rash. The disease also can spread from person to person through large respiratory droplets during long periods of face to face contact or by touching body fluids of a sick person or objects, such as bedding or clothing, that have the virus on them.

##### **Who is at risk for monkeypox?**

Most people who are ill with monkeypox in the United States got sick after close contact with prairie dogs that had been purchased as pets. Some patients may have gotten sick by contact with other animals. If you have not had close contact with a wild or exotic animal, then the risk that you might have monkeypox is very low.

##### **How do I know if I have monkeypox?**

About 12 days after people are infected with the virus, they will get a fever, headache, muscle aches, and backache. In addition, their lymph nodes will swell and they will feel tired. 1 to 3 days (or longer) after the fever starts, the infected person will get a rash. This rash turns into raised bumps filled with fluid. The bumps

have several stages before they get crusty, scab over, and fall off. The illness lasts for 2 to 4 weeks.

### **How is monkeypox treated?**

There is no treatment for monkeypox. In Africa, people who got the smallpox vaccine in the past had a lower risk of monkeypox. CDC has sent out guidelines that explain when smallpox vaccine should be used to protect against monkeypox.

### **How is monkeypox prevented?**

A private citizen may not import into the United States any rodent of African origin. This also applies to rodents whose native habitat is in Africa, even if those rodents were born elsewhere. To prevent monkeypox, do not bring a rodent of African origin or a rodent that has been housed with one of African origin into your home.

All information presented is intended for public use. For more information, please refer to: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/monkeypox/index.htm>

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